

7 September 1971

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Telephone Call from John Lehman, White House Staff,
Regarding a Letter from Senator Stennis to the President
on the Subject of CIA Funding of Operations in Laos

1. Late today, I received a call from John Lehman informing me that the President had received a letter from Chairman John Stennis, Senate Armed Services Committee. The thrust of the letter was that since U.S. operations in Laos had become a matter of public knowledge, and since CIA involvement in the operations was attracting attention to the CIA budget, he felt he could not support the funding of these operations by the Agency in FY 1973.

2. Mr. Lehman commented that he could not believe that this was a decision which Senator Stennis had reached "out of the blue." I commented that in point of fact over the years, dating back to Senator Russell's chairmanship of the Appropriations Committee, increasing concern had been expressed over CIA funding of programs in Southeast Asia. I added that I was aware that Ed Braswell and Chairman Stennis had become increasingly concerned over the debate which they felt was inevitable on this issue when the military procurement authorization bill comes up for action on the Senate floor in the near future, and this undoubtedly had caused Senator Stennis to crystalize his thinking on the subject.

3. Mr. Lehman asked that I advise the Director of his call, which I said I would do. He also said that this matter would probably be the subject of an LIG meeting in the near future. I told him Mr. Maury would be returning from leave tomorrow, that I would bring him up-to-date, and that he would undoubtedly attend such a meeting.

Acting Legislative Counsel

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